



Universiteit
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Governance and Global Affairs



Measuring Complexity and Reproducibility

A Comprehensive Benchmark of LLMs for Multilingual Policy Agenda Topic Annotation

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Introduction

Research Overview

- ❑ **Benchmark study.** Testing 79 contemporary LLMs on zero-shot classification of policy topics.
- ❑ **Multilingual approach.** Covering Danish, Dutch, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.
- ❑ **Performance analysis.** Evaluating how reasoning capabilities, model architecture and deployment affect accuracy.



Artwork by Leonardo Phoenix model

The Challenge of Policy Annotation



Artwork by DALL-E 3 model

- ⚖️ Complex classification.** Assigning one of 21 major policy topics to legislative texts.
- 🌍 Language barriers.** Working across eight different languages with varying resources.
- 📝 Semantic nuance.** Requiring fine distinctions between related policy areas.
- ⌚ Reproducibility concerns.** Balancing performance with scientific reproducibility.

Empirical Expectations

Research Hypotheses

💡 Reasoning Advantage Hypothesis

LLMs explicitly optimised for chain-of-thought (CoT) reasoning will achieve better performance in zero-shot policy agenda classification.

🔒 Openness Penalty Hypothesis

Proprietary, closed-source LLMs will outperform open-source LLMs on zero-shot policy agenda classification.

♻️ Reproducibility Penalty Hypothesis

LLMs deployed locally using a deterministic sampling will achieve lower performance in zero-shot policy agenda classification.

Methods

Ground-Truth Data

Denmark

15 101 bills
1953–2016

NLD

4 684 bills
1981–2009

UK

6 169 Acts
1911–2015

France

3 069 laws
1979–2013

Hungary

8 220 bills
1990–2022

Italy

4 554 laws
1983–2013

Brazil

2 449 laws
2003–2014

Spain

2 256 laws-decrees
1980–2018

Note. We split the samples in a proportion of 70/15/15 (stratified by major topic) for training, validation, and testing for future fine-tuning jobs. The samples correspond to ground-truth data of the Comparative Agendas Project.

79 LLMs

Run **620 times** under different conditions
(e.g., parameters, API/local, temperature,
datasets/language) for

- (1) **overall performance metrics**
- (2) **meta-analysis**



SOTA closed-source LLMs

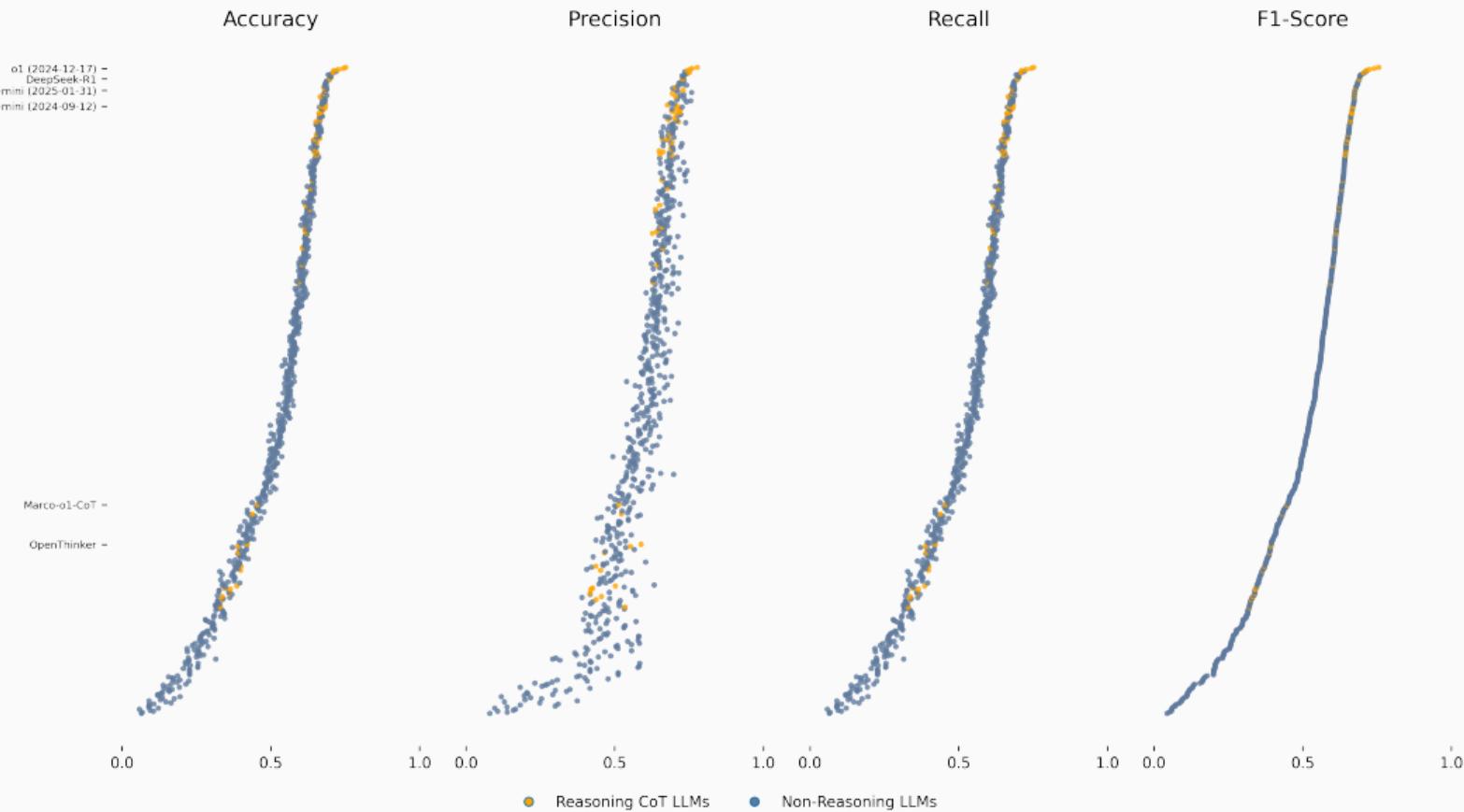
o4-mini, o3-mini, o1, GPT-4.1,
GPT-4.5-preview, Grok 3 Beta, Claude 3.7
Sonnet, among others



SOTA open-source LLMs

Llama 4 Maverick (400B) and Scout (107B),
Mistral 3.1 (24B), Llama 3.3 (70B),
DeepSeek-R1 (671B), DeepSeek-V3 (671B),
among others

Results



Top Performing Models

0.76

**Maximum
F1-Score**

Achieved by OpenAI
reasoning models

0.69

**Top Open-
Source Models**

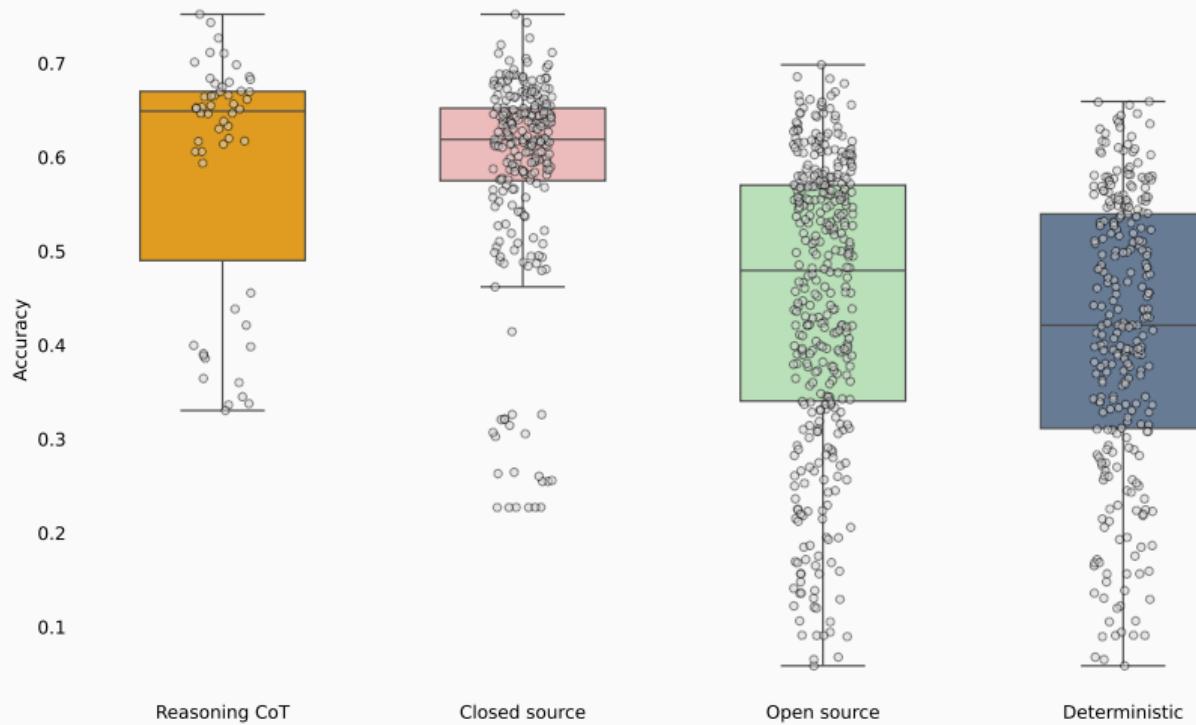
DeepSeek-R1 and V3 (926B)
and Llama 3.1 (405B)

0.54

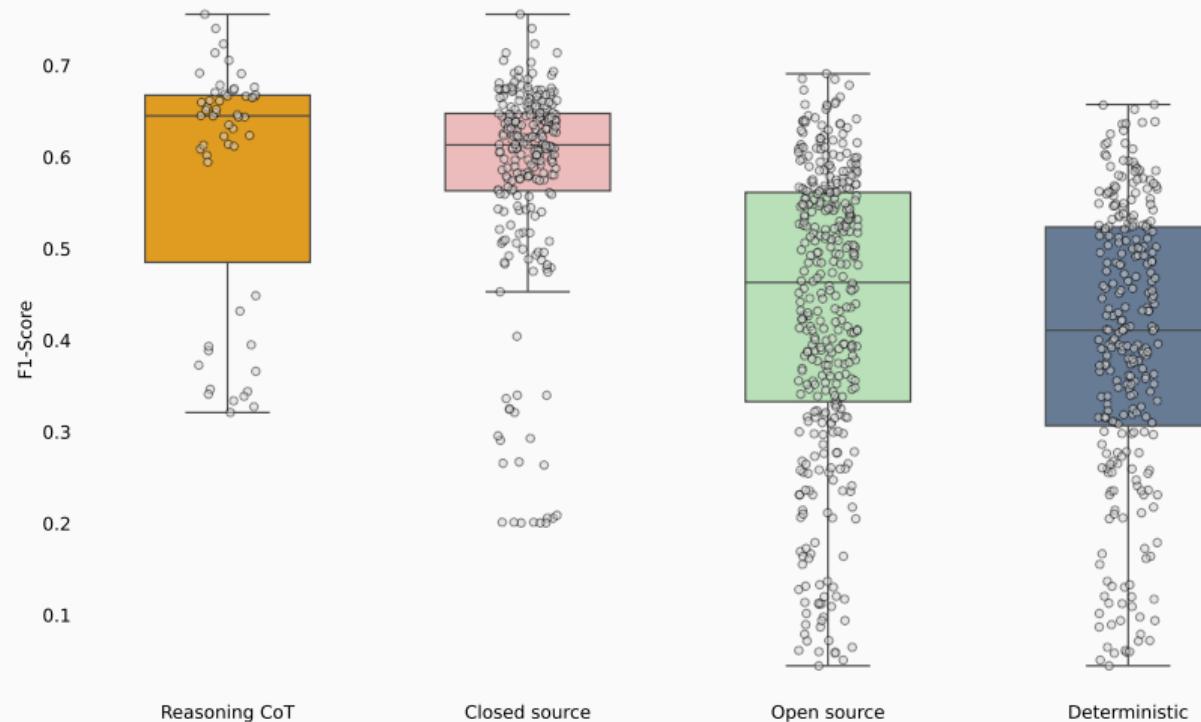
**Mid-Range
Performance**

Gemini 1.5 series,
GPT4o-mini, Mis-
tral models, Qwen 2.5

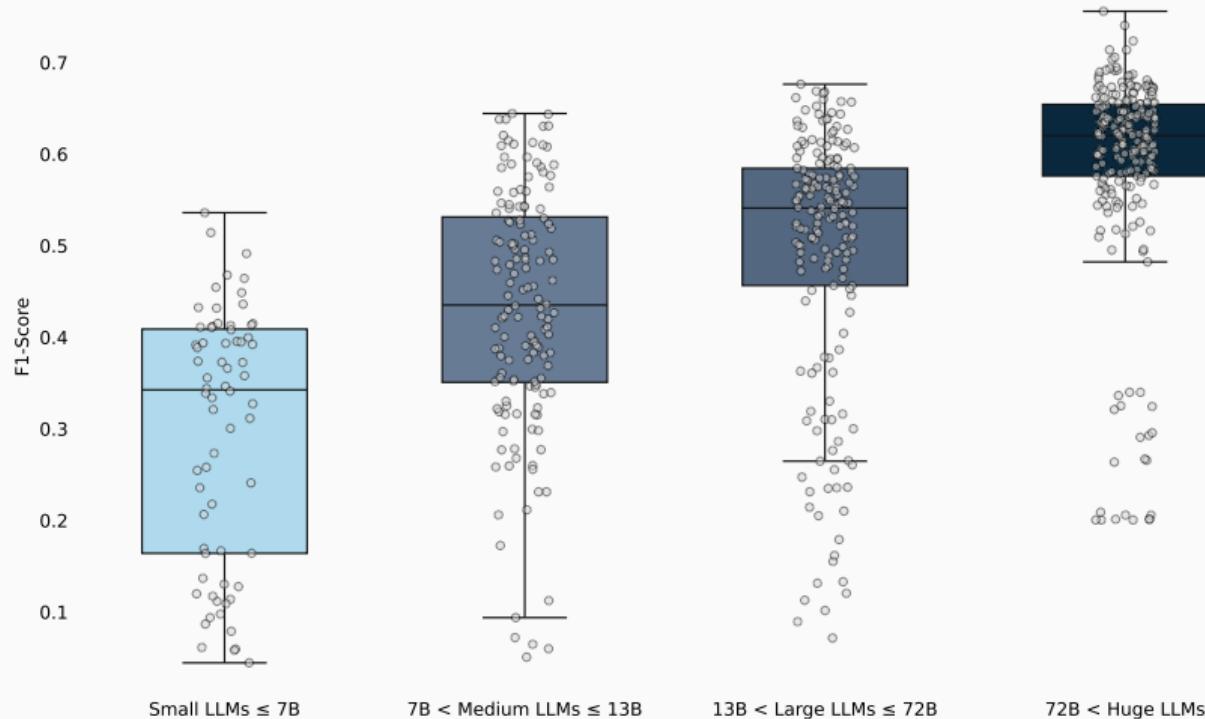
Accuracy Across Reasoning, Source and Deterministic Setup



F1-Score Across Reasoning, Source and Deterministic Setup



F1-Score Across Number of Parameters



Determinants of Performance

	Model I	Model II	Model III	Model IV	Model V
Reasoning CoT	0.462*** (0.031)	0.323*** (0.096)	0.296*** (0.092)	0.359*** (0.086)	0.357*** (0.086)
Open source LLMs		-0.637*** (0.056)	-0.205*** (0.076)	-0.128* (0.072)	-0.126* (0.071)
Deterministic setup			-0.591*** (0.075)	-0.328*** (0.076)	-0.330*** (0.075)
Constant	-0.112*** (0.105)	0.287*** (0.045)	0.291*** (0.043)	-0.476*** (0.092)	-0.285** (0.112)
Parameters	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Language FE	No	No	No	No	Yes
<i>N</i>	620	620	620	620	620
τ	0.734	0.665	0.633	0.592	0.590
I^2	99.04%	98.84%	98.72%	98.54%	98.53%
R^2	0.029	0.203	0.277	0.368	0.372

Next Steps

Comparing with Fine-Tuned Models

Language	Best LLM	F1-Score	Fine-Tuned	F1-Score	Δ Val	Δ Best LLM
Danish	GPT-4.5	0.679	Babel Machine	0.925	+0.065	+0.246
Dutch	o1	0.724	Babel Machine	0.906	+0.066	+0.182
English	o1	0.706	Babel Machine ft-XLM-RoBERTa	0.869 0.810	-0.031 -0.009	+0.163 +0.104
French	o1	0.714	Babel Machine	0.821	-0.029	+0.107
Hungarian	GPT.4-5	0.672	Babel Machine	0.751	-0.099	+0.079
Italian	o1	0.675	Babel Machine	0.930	+0.120	+0.255
Portuguese	o1	0.651	Babel Machine	0.867	-0.063	+0.216
Spanish	o4-mini	0.756	Babel Machine	0.916	+0.066	+0.160

Note. All estimates are weighted F1-scores obtained on our fixed held-out test set. The columns Δ Val and Δ Best LLM indicate: (i) the change relative to the best result on the model's own validation set; and (ii) the change relative to the strongest zero-shot LLM, respectively.

How much data leakage is present here? Probably considerable, so that the results may be inflated. However, the potential advantages of fine-tuning still seem to outweigh in-context learning, even for BERT-like models.

Focus on Specific Topics: Environment and Energy

AI-Driven Text Analysis in the Political Economy of Sustainability: Hybrid Retrieval-Augmented Generation and LLM Multi-Agent Approach (ECPR Joint Sessions):

LLM	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-Score
o3	0.968	0.906	0.993	0.948
Hermes 3 (70B)	0.965	0.927	0.956	0.941
GPT-4o	0.964	0.910	0.973	0.940
Grok 3 Mini Beta	0.964	0.913	0.969	0.940
GPT-4.5-preview	0.963	0.895	0.990	0.940
Nemotron (70B)	0.963	0.907	0.973	0.939
Grok 3 Mini Fast Beta	0.963	0.913	0.966	0.938
GPT-4.1	0.962	0.894	0.986	0.938
Grok Beta	0.962	0.894	0.986	0.938
GPT-4.1 mini	0.962	0.897	0.983	0.938

Takeaways

Takeaways

- **Reasoning Advantage confirmed.** Chain-of-thought capabilities boost performance by **9 points**.
- **Openness Penalty inconclusive.** Slightly lower performance than proprietary models. The effect is significant only at 90%.
- **Reproducibility Penalty confirmed.** Deterministic deployment reduces F1-score by **8 points** but ensures consistency.
- **Fine-Tuning Advantage to be tested.** Supervised transformers seem to outperform zero-shot LLMs by 10+ points.
- **Future directions.** Extend fine-tuning and test whether alignment can close the reasoning gap, advanced prompting, and temperature experiments.

Thank you very much!

Do you have any questions?

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